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SC/ST and OBCs appointed as Notary Public

2582. SHRI V.N. GADGIL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how many advocates have been appointed Notary Public by the Central Government during the last three years; and

(b) the number out of the above who belong to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and O.B.Cs?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) and (b) 702 Advocates have been appointed by the Central Government as Notary Public during the last three years. No separate quota is prescribed for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. The application/memorial form prescribed under the Notaries Rules, 1956 does not contain any column for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes for the purpose of maintaining separate account of such categories.

Speedy disposal of road accident cases

2583. SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a large number of cases are lying pending in the different State High Courts";

(b) whether Government propose to issue necessary directions to the Chief Justice of the High Courts to take adequate measures to dispose the pending cases, particularly the cases of road accidents victims expeditiously in accordance with the objective/spirits of Motor Vehicle Act, 1988; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A request has already been made to the Chief Justices of the High Courts to take measures like grouping and classification of cases involving similar question of law, computerization of records etc. for expeditious disposal of all pending cases. In addition, the Government have taken a series of steps in this regards. This includes steps for amendment of procedural laws, increase in the number of posts of Judges in the High Courts, provision of a statutory base to Lok Adalats and adoption of other alternative methods of disputes resolution.

Repealing of out-dated laws

2584. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Govern ment-appointed Commission has. recom mended repealing of out-dated 1300 laws out of 2500 existing laws; and

(b) if so, whether Government have accepted these recommendations and whether it would also be ensured that cumbersome and time consuming pro cedures are streamlined with a view to ensuring speedy justice to the litigant public?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have constituted a Standing Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Personnel) for monitoring the follow-up action on the recommendations contained in the Report. Since the recommendations of the Commission concern all Ministries/Departments of the Government of India as well as State Governments/Union territories,

acceptance of the report by the Government would require examination of the various recommendations by the concerned Ministries/Departments as well as States/UTs.

Backlog of Court Cases

2585. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Executive is responsible for backlog of cour cases; and

(b) if so, what arc the other reasons?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) and (b) The pendency of cases in Courts is due to various complex factors including increased institution of cases, rise in population, inadequate judge strength, granting of adjournments, radical change in the pattern of litigation, multifarious litigation, long arguments and lawyers' strike etc.

Multi-crore scam in photo identity card scheme

2586. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether multi-crore scam in photo identity card scheme has been pointed out by the audit;

(b) if so-, the details thereof; and

(c) the States where the scheme has been completed?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) and (b) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India in its Report for the year 1997 (March) Vol. III has made certain observations about underutilisation of funds alloted by the Central Government for implementation of the scheme of electors photo identity cards, excess/avoidable expenditure in some States due to non-observance of instructions issued by the Election Commission of India etc.

(c) The scheme of issue of Photo Iden-tity Cards is an on-going scheme. A Statement giving the status of the scheme in various States and Union Territories is laid on the Table of the House. *[Refer to the Statement appended to the Answer to Unstarred Question 2578 (b) and (c)].*

Implementation of Lower Damodar Drainage Scheme

2587. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Lower Damodar Drainage Scheme, initially a part of the Damodar Valley Project was never implemented by West Bengal Government and this is the main cause of flood in Hoogly and Howrah districts;

(b) whether it is also a fact that four more dams planned in the second phase at Balpahari, Aiyar, Bokaro and Berma in Bihar are still waiting to come up since the inception of DVC;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether any proposal exists with Government regarding completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) to (c) The primary consideration in the flood control aspect of the DVC dams was to provide adequate protection to left flood embankment alongwith Damodar river by restricting the flood at Durgapur barrage to 2,50,000 cusecs. The drainage scheme was meant to ensure safe discharge of 2,50,000 cusecs in Lower Damodar channels. The implementation of the Lower Damodar Drainage Scheme rests with the Government of West Bengal.